

Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training (CETT): A Summit of the Americas Initiative

Assessment of Institutional Capacity &
Recommendations for Management
Structure for CETT in Central America

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Recommendations for Management Structure
for CETT in Central America**

Prepared by:

David Schrier
Leonel Valdivia

Prepared for:

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*The opinions expressed in this document are those of the authors and not those of the
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PREFACE

The Basic Education and Policy Support Activity (BEPS), a five-year initiative sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)'s Center for Human Capacity Development, is designed to improve the quality, effectiveness, and access to formal and nonformal basic education. As an IQC contract type, BEPS operates through both core funds and Mission buy-ins to provide both short- and long-term assistance to Missions and Regional Bureaus.

BEPS focuses on several important program areas: basic education; educational policy analysis and reform; restorative and additive educational work in countries in crisis (presence and non-presence); and the alleviation of abusive child labor. Services to be provided include policy appraisals and assessments, training and institutional strengthening, and the design and implementation of pilot projects, feasibility studies, applied research studies, seminars/workshops, and evaluations. Under BEPS, USAID also will compile and disseminate results, lessons learned, and other generalizable information through electronic networks, training workshops, national conferences, quarterly and annual reports, publications, and other vehicles.

One of the buy-ins for the BEPS Activity is the *Improved Human Resource Policies Task Order*, a task order funded by LAC/RSD-EHR that provides technical assistance in basic education to USAID's Latin America and Caribbean Region. Helping to launch President George Bush's Centers of Excellence in Teacher Training Initiative is one of the subtasks under that task order.

This assessment report was prepared as an input for USAID in the early conceptual, developmental stages of the Central America and Dominican Republic Centers of Excellence. The recommendations contained in this report should neither be interpreted as conclusions, nor final decisions. The process of developing the CETT is dynamic; it evolves and changes as new information and inputs that become available are considered. Ongoing research and activities continue to inform the appropriate developmental focus and structure for each sub-regional Center of Excellence.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BEPS	Basic Education Policy Support
CETT	Centers of Excellence for Teacher Training
CRA	Centro de Recursos para el Aprendizaje/Learning Resource Center
EDUCO	Community-Based Education Program of World Bank
EDUNET	MOE's school connectivity program in Costa Rica
EHR	Education and Human Resources
FEPADE	Fundación Empresarial para el Desarrollo Educativo/Business Foundation for Educational Development (El Salvador)
FOD	Fundación Omar Dengo (Costa Rica)
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
ILCE	Instituto Latinoamericano para la Comunicación Educativa/Latin American Institute for Educational Communication (Mexico)
INCAE	Instituto Centroamericano de Administración de Empresas/ Central American Institute for Business Administration (Costa Rica/Nicaragua)
INTEC	Instituto Tecnológico de Santo Domingo/Technological Institute of Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic)
LAC	Latin America and Caribbean region
MOE	Ministry of Education
OD	Organizational Development
PID	Proyecto de Iniciativas Democráticas (USAID-funded democracy and governance project managed by PUCMM)
PREAL	Programa de Reforma Educativa en América Latina (Partnership for Educational Revitalization in the Americas)
PUCMM	Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra/Pontifical Catholic University Mother and Teacher (Dominican Republic)
TT	Teacher Training
UPN	Universidad Pedagógica Nacional-Francisco Morazán/National Pedagogical University-Francisco Morazán (Honduras)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UVG	Universidad del Valle de Guatemala/Del Valle University of Guatemala

INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the preliminary findings and recommendations of the Central American institutional assessment conducted by BEPS during the period of January 12-28, 2002 across eight institutions within the countries of Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico and the Dominican Republic as a follow-up to an initial needs and capacities assessment conducted in October 2001 across eight countries. This rapid assessment generated ideas and recommendations for consideration by the Consultative Committee at its planned February, 2002 meeting in Miami, Florida.

The earlier needs and capacities assessment had two purposes: (1) to identify teacher training and reading instruction needs in the region, and (2) to identify institutional and country capacities to address those needs through developing or supporting a Center of Excellence for Teacher Training. As part of looking at capacities, the assessment team evaluated numerous institutions and identified six for further consideration as potential lead institutions in designing, implementing and delivering the CETT program.

The report by the team for the initial (needs and capacities) assessment did not recognize the critical importance of technical capacity in reading instruction expertise to the Centers of Excellence program. Thus, in addition to the top six candidates recommended in the needs and capacities report, the USAID determined that it needed to add to the list of institutions to be assessed one or two institutions recognized as having strong capacity in reading instruction. Two institutions were selected in consultation between USAID, its contractors (including the first assessment team), and members of the consultative committee of education experts from across the hemisphere.

The final eight institutions selected were those assessed as having the highest levels of institutional capacity relevant to serving as either (a) a lead, managing institution for the proposed Central American Center of Excellence for Teacher Training, or (b) a key, supporting institution with demonstrated excellence in one or more of the key components of the Central American CETT. The follow-up assessment team was also asked to propose and evaluate models for how the CETT could to be organized. The information in the follow-up assessment was intended to facilitate the design of the Central American CETT. (Annexes A and B contain the Scope of Work and the Work Plan.)

It is important to note that the findings presented in this report are intended to spark discussion and assist in the development and refinement of a workable, effective, innovative design for organizing the Central American CETT. Any recommendations or suggestions should be construed not as prescriptions for pre-determined solutions, but as catalysts to stimulate creative thinking in conceptualizing a CETT model that can succeed in Central America and the Dominican Republic.

Regional Characteristics

The institutional assessment built upon the recommendations and conclusions of the initial assessment team. The needs and capacities assessment not only provided recommendations for potential viable institutions to form the nucleus of the Central American CETT initiative, but also provided a general framework for this institutional assessment. The initial assessment team posited the following tentative findings, to be tested in a follow-up assessment:

- No single institution in the region has the capacity across the full range of required qualities and expertise to host the Central American CETT alone. As such, the Central American CETT should consider pursuit of a model based upon an integrated coordination of institutions fulfilling key roles and responsibilities.
- The region possesses a wide array of resources that should be considered for incorporation into the Central American CETT. Such resources include reading experts, teachers' unions, public and private institutions delivering pre-service and in-service teacher training, and universities with high-technology facilities and/or demonstrated capacities in innovative distance education strategies and techniques.
- Teacher training quality is inadequate. In general, both pre-service and in-service teachers and school administrators need strengthened skills and expanded knowledge of methodologies in reading instruction. In addition, any training delivered should provide appropriate follow-up for future training activities.
- The numerous education reform programs in the region have brought some significant and positive changes. However, some key issues are still unresolved such as overcrowded classes, lack of materials, high dropout rates, and lack of testing programs.

In addition, regional and national sociopolitical issues have presented unique challenges in the past to implementing truly regional initiatives across national boundaries of Central American countries, the Dominican Republic and Mexico. The Consultative Committee, at its November 15-16, 2001 meeting, emphasized its concern that the Central American CETT should be located in a Central American country (or countries) that experience acute deficiencies in early childhood reading performance and teacher capacity in reading instruction, particularly in disadvantaged or remote communities. In consideration of the geographic separation of the Dominican Republic from the rest of the region, the importance of including a Dominican institution in the CETT structure was recognized to assure the country's full integration into CETT activities.

The initial assessment report recommended utilization of a consortium (or managed network) approach as a viable strategic pathway toward Central American CETT development. The follow-up assessment team proceeded to visit Central American countries identified in the initial assessment, and considered CETT organizational and

management strategies largely, though not exclusively, through the lens of two options vis-a-vis viability: a consortium (or network) model and a single (or dual) institution model.

It is important to note that the initial assessment team recommended exploring a consortium (or network) model for the CETT in Central America, both for reasons of establishing a truly regional project as well as in recognition of the lack of a single institution meeting CETT criteria across key skill areas. The consortium model presents specific design challenges, including complexity of network management, significant time requirements for set-up before the CETT could be implemented, the need for a strong leader at the outset, a complicated contractual process and multiplying costs.

As for the single institution model, the initial assessment team found a lack of one institution demonstrating capacities in a cross-section of CETT-required skill areas. Thus, the initial assessment team concluded preliminarily that, for a region-wide impact, the single institution model was not viable.

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

The follow-up assessment team consisted of an Organizational Development (OD), or management, specialist and a Teacher Training (TT), or technical, specialist. The entire field assessment, team discussions, analysis of findings, consultation with Washington-based BEPS and USAID staff, and first draft report were completed in a three-week period. Due to the tight timeline, the two-person assessment team spent one day in each country, in which the team gained access to officials, conducted interviews and made observations. As is obvious to the rigorous researcher, it is not possible to gain access to and retrieve fully authoritative, verifiable data covering a wide range of issues in such a short visit. However, the assessment team, through advanced planning, did the best job possible to gain access to appropriate information and sources of data, including both documents and people. In some isolated cases, there was participant observation (e.g., a laboratory school associated with an institution).

The OD specialist assessed organizational capabilities, as interpreted by the BEPS team in consultation with USAID, which included the following primary areas:

- Capacity to team successfully,
- Correspondence of mission and values,
- Institutional talent and relative strength of expertise,
- Commitment of senior managers,
- Administrative/financial capability,
- Absorptive capacity (non-financial organizational capabilities),
- Human resource base,
- Broad-based institutional support, and
- Potential institutional impact.

Each of the above areas was operationalized in a manner permitting tighter scrutiny over the capabilities to be included. (See Annex C for OD sub-definitions.)

Similarly, the TT specialist focused on the following key areas:

- Reading instruction expertise,
- Teacher training,
- Diagnostic and performance assessment,
- Research,
- Distance learning and information and communication technologies (ICT) applications, and
- Country educational environment.

Annex D contains sub-definitions for each of these technical capabilities.

For the purpose of collecting data, both opportunistically and systematically, the consultants utilized a survey methodology for structured interviews and took advantage of additional time to explore related topics not covered in the questioning, including review of pertinent documents. (See Annex E for interview questions and Annex F for contact list.)

Focus of Work by Consultants

As described above, the eight institutions assessed by the consultants included six recommended by the needs and capacities report and two added to fill a gap in the initial assessment through consultation with the first assessment team and other experts. The added institutions were the Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra and the Instituto Tecnológico de Santo Domingo, both in the Dominican Republic and both described as having good capacities in early primary-grade reading instruction. The full list of institutions assessed follows:

- FEPADE (Fundación Empresarial para el Desarrollo Educativo/Business Foundation for Educational Development), El Salvador
- FOD (Fundación Omar Dengo/ Omar Dengo Foundation), Costa Rica
- ILCE (Instituto Latinoamericano para la Comunicación Educativa/Latin American Institute for Educational Communication), Mexico
- INCAE (Instituto Centroamericano de Administración de Empresas/Central American Institute for Business Administration), Costa Rica/Nicaragua
- INTEC (Instituto Tecnológico de Santo Domingo/Technological Institute of Santo Domingo), Dominican Republic

- PUCMM (Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra/Pontifical Catholic University Mother and Teacher), Dominican Republic
- UPN (Universidad Pedagógica Nacional-Francisco Morazán/National Pedagogical University-Francisco Morazán), Honduras
- UVG (Universidad del Valle de Guatemala/Del Valle University of Guatemala)

FINDINGS

The follow-up assessment team attempted to organize and analyze the data as it unfolded during the brief, intensive period of the assessment. Although some tentative analysis and resulting hypotheses evolved, it was not possible until the end of the assessment trip to step back and begin the process of objectively analyzing results in a macro and micro context.

Organizational Capacities

The OD specialist looked at elements of organizational soundness identified as critical for the CETT, including, but not limited to, financial structure, personnel, existing regional outreach and possibilities of expansion, as well as available material and physical resources to support residential and distance learning. The OD consultant reviewed qualitative data and presented the following findings (additional detail is provided in Annex G: Institutional Profiles):

- UPN has superior, current, high-tech equipment and capacity for potential utilization in Internet-based distance education. UPN's managerial capacity to utilize and integrate this expertise into the CETT could be strengthened by other institutions' capabilities. This combination of capacities would expand the CETT's reach in the region.
- FEPADE's expertise in developing and managing USAID and multilateral contracts that are focused on educational development is excellent. In addition, FEPADE demonstrates strong skills in attracting private-sector participation and funding.
- ILCE in Mexico provides excellent, although cost-intensive, organizational and technical resources, which could be brought to bear in the CETT in well-targeted, selected roles and interventions. ILCE is a regional institution in which representatives from 13 member countries throughout Latin America sit on the board.
- INCAE in Costa Rica could provide high-quality, albeit relatively expensive, organizational and technical resources to the CETT. INCAE's particular strengths are related to private-sector collaboration, as well as region-wide credibility in provision of business education and assorted short-term technical assistance. [The follow-up assessment team visited INCAE not to explore

teacher training capacities, but to investigate reported regional organizing capabilities, specifically in collaboration with both public and private sectors.]

- UVG, Fundación Omar Dengo, PUCMM and INTEC do not have organizational expertise for regional management in required CETT capacities.

Technical Capacities

The TT consultant looked at a complex set of skills essential to developing and sustaining solid reading instruction skills in pre-service teacher training programs and maintaining continual quality improvement in sustainable, in-service training. Some preliminary findings include (see also Annex G):

- UPN in Honduras demonstrates the highest capability in technical areas among the eight institutions investigated in the follow-up assessment. UPN has extensive teacher training experience and is one of the few institutions regionally where the majority of students enrolled are in the teacher training program. UPN also has a tremendous reservoir of expertise in diagnostic and performance assessment. UPN has exceptional educational research capabilities and both depth and breadth of faculty.
- Both PUCMM and INTEC in the Dominican Republic have programs in teacher training in reading instruction methodologies, although for the CETT the team felt that PUCMM could better meet the needs in terms of contracting experience and in-house expertise.
- ILCE has demonstrated capacity and expertise in research, development and provision of long-distance, primary-school teacher training via virtual technology, television programming, videos and films to remote/marginal populations throughout Mexico and ILCE's 13 member countries in Latin America.
- UVG, UPN, and FEPADE demonstrate expertise in diagnostic and performance assessment, as well as a capacity in teacher training. These three institutions also offer the most developed programs in educational research, as well as the most faculty members with terminal degrees in their disciplines.
- Fundación Omar Dengo uses distance learning for teacher training, although this area is, at present, rather limited in scope.
- INCAE does not provide teacher training, so there was no need to assess technical capacities.

Preliminary Integrated Findings

1. The follow-up assessment team asserts that an essential component of any CETT configuration involves an institution in each country of Central America serving as a crucial country-level link in assuring the delivery of meaningful service to the target populations.
2. The follow-up assessment team affirmed the initial assessment team's findings that no one institution possesses the range of skill sets and recognized credibility to serve as single host of the Central American CETT.

3. It appears that different institutions distinguish themselves in pockets of excellence with capabilities that could be brought to bear in developing and implementing the Central American CETT in a consortium model.
4. In order for the CETT to be successfully utilized and accessed by all countries in the Central American region, meaningful consideration should be given to creating opportunities for leadership, innovation, and collaboration across all aspects of program design and implementation. The spirit of such a collaboration could yield potentially valuable results which affirm and support the notion of developing a regionally based sustainable CETT initiative beyond the five years of U.S. government funding.
5. In light of the above findings, the follow-up assessment team re-asserts that, while a single institution model may be more cost effective, the CETT would suffer in quality of product, effectiveness of the teacher training initiative, and capacity to deliver services regionally should only one institution be selected to implement the CETT.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Central American CETT embodies the concept that realizing common needs and sharing resources would strengthen the impact of educational interventions in Central America and the Dominican Republic. The CETT envisions a program in which institutions work together to achieve program goals across Central America, i.e., to improve teachers' skills and raise reading achievement of first through third graders. These recommendations attempt to explore modes of delivery of teacher training services that enable institutions and experts to work as a team across borders. For example, one institution's distance learning capabilities could become a conduit for delivery of another's expertise in reading instruction across the region. Country-level institutions could enable greater effectiveness of the CETT's reach into classrooms at the local level. Institutions would need a certain degree of flexibility and adaptability for this model to work, as roles and responsibilities evolve, always optimizing the contributions of the collection of talents to beneficiaries and stakeholders.

Mindful of the above vision, the follow-up assessment team affirms that the Central American CETT must be composed of a country-level participating institution in each of the seven beneficiary countries. These country-level institutions would be coordinated by four lead institutions selected on the basis of management and technical abilities. These lead institutions bring together the capacities needed for the CETT in a cohesive, manageable group of four that can share responsibilities and make collective decisions about the production of materials and implementation of the program. The proposed model recognizes the high importance of working with country-level institutions that would serve as links for reaching targeted local populations.

Country-level participating institutions: delivery and distribution of services

A participating institution in each country would assure country-specific relevance and ownership, and adaptation of program principals to national and local contexts. These institutions would work to focus programming and project impact on schools, teachers, and student populations at the local level. Country-level intermediaries would coordinate with production-level institutions, national and local governments, private-sector stakeholders and public-sector entities, such as teachers' unions and school systems. Country-level leadership would advocate for change, instill local and national will for continued reform and provide a sustainable pathway for delivery of teacher training. Institutional strengthening at the country level in CETT skill areas would also lay a solid foundation and improve key capacities for the continuation of CETT program objectives after the five-year life of project funding.

Regional-level institutions: management, production and implementation

The country-level institutions would be part of a consortium managed by a group of lead institutions, selected from among the eight institutions assessed. These institutions would provide a unifying and coordinating structure to the Central American CETT. These institutions would produce materials and services, combining their organizational and technical skills to coordinate the CETT. The production-level group of institutions would provide technical assistance, quality control, and centralized program planning and curriculum development.

Country- and regional-level collaboration

One way to make sure that country-level institutions have a voice among lead institutions could be to form a country-level consultative committee made up of officials from each participating institution. This committee would provide the four lead institutions with invaluable guidance on design, monitoring and distribution. The consultative committee would focus on ensuring the sharing of benefits of the CETT product with schools, teachers and students at the country and local levels, and would play the role of change advocate in members' respective education environments. The committee would consult on the production and dissemination of materials, and adaptation of outputs to meet country-specific needs, including consideration of local language differences and preferences.

Institutions recommended for regional leadership

The follow-up team found that strong capacities to host and participate in the CETT exist in Central America, but are not contained wholly in one institution. Therefore, the team proposes the collaboration of four selected institutions to bring together all of the needed capacities.

The institutional capacity assessment team proposes, as production-level institutions in the Central American CETT consortium, UPN in Honduras, FEPADE in El Salvador, ILCE in Mexico and PUCMM in the Dominican Republic. While all four institutions would provide multiple capabilities to the CETT, UPN would primarily provide technical capacities in teacher training while FEPADE would bring administrative capabilities and expertise in developing private-sector involvement. ILCE would offer distance learning and ICT resources, thus expanding the modes of delivery for teacher training. PUCMM would provide reading instruction expertise.

Table 1: CETT Regional-Level Leadership for Central American CETT

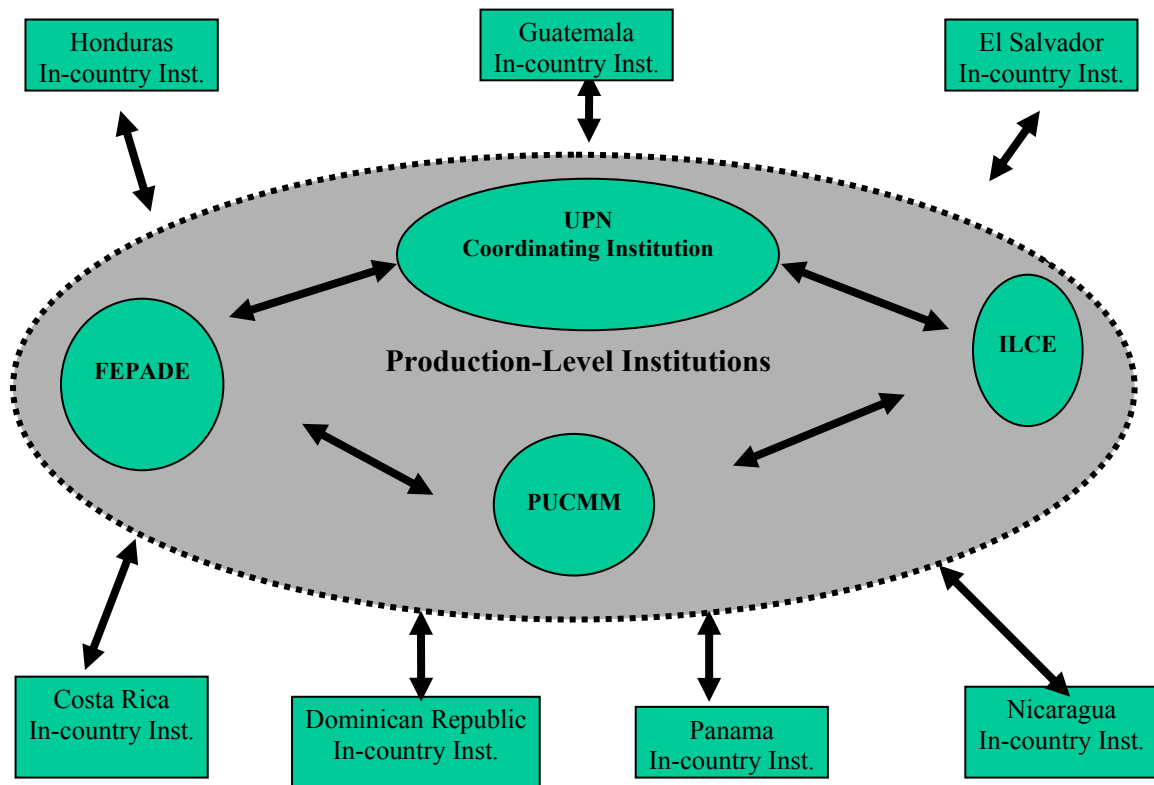
Capacity Potentially Needed for CETT	Strongest Central American Institution in Needed Capacity
Teacher training	UPN
Diagnostic and performance assessment	UPN
Research	UPN
Administration	FEPADE
Private-sector partnering	FEPADE
Distance learning (applications and software)	ILCE
Reading instruction	PUCMM

Each of these production-level institutions would also serve as the country-level link in each of their countries (UPN in Honduras, PUCMM in the Dominican Republic and FEPADE in El Salvador). These institutions would work with country-level institutions in Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama and Costa Rica in a bi-directional manner, both providing and receiving technical assistance, so as to assure effective delivery to the target populations.

In keeping with the guiding principles of the CETT initiative, the program would start small by beginning in a few countries, then expand to reach other countries as services are tested for effectiveness and multiplied accordingly. Countries of first priority include those that demonstrate the greatest need in reading instruction for the early grades: Guatemala, Honduras, the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua. Once a solid program is established and results demonstrate progress toward program goals, the CETT would expand to El Salvador, Panama and Costa Rica.

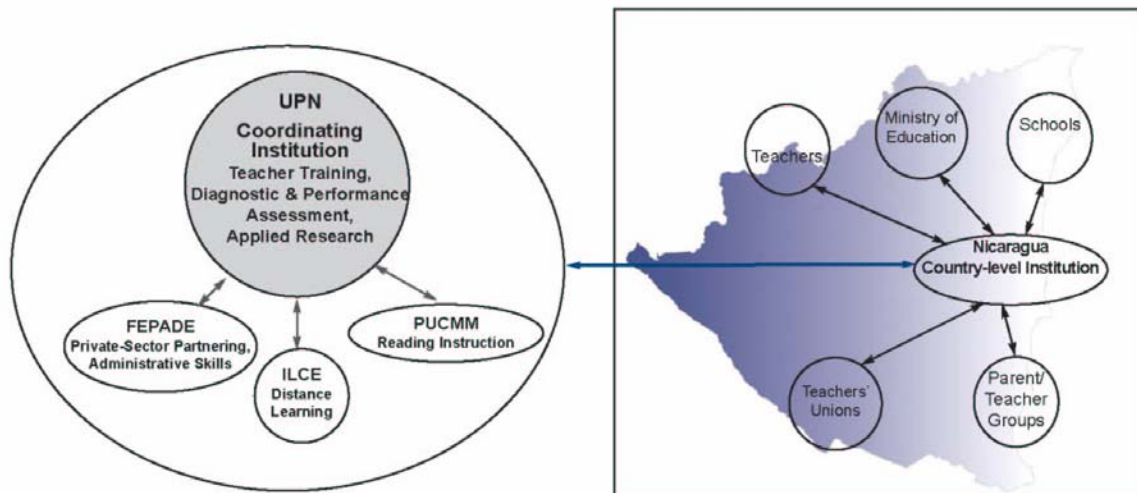
The following graphic (Figure 1) represents the consortium model in which the four production-level institutions interact and complement one another to provide a solid and supportive leadership group to the in-country institutions. These country-level institutions function in each country of the region, taking the teacher training and reading instruction improvement to the local level.

Figure 1: Central American CETT Consortium Model



The second graphic (Figure 2) illustrates the interaction of the country-level institutions with national- and local-level organizations, such as Ministries of Education, teachers' unions, schools, parent/teacher groups, and teachers, as well as the communication between the country-level participating institution and the four production-level institutions.

Figure 2: CETT collaboration at the country/beneficiary level using Nicaragua as an example



Advantages of the model

- Solid management
- Utilizes the best technical resources available in the region
- Assures a high level of participation by each country
- Eases frictions among countries in relation to the program and reinforces political will

Disadvantages of the model

- Potentially cost intensive
- Complex at the contractual level
- Some political sensitivity

Recommended Next Steps

In order to be responsive to the environment which is encouraging rapid development of the CETT program, parallel conversations should occur with regional ministry of education representatives and recommended lead and in-country institutions that have been identified through the initial and follow-up assessments and ongoing informal dialogue between USAID and regional MOE representatives.

The USAID negotiating team would enter into preliminary conversations with institutions that might be considered for regional leadership. The emphasis of this approach should be dialogue with senior officials to explore capacity, interest and commitment to serve a truly regionally focused activity. The institutional assessment team recommends initiating these conversations with UPN since the institution demonstrates strength in the majority of technical capacities needed by the CETT.

Acknowledging historical and current complexities of implementing a regional collaboration of this nature, it is recommended, as a parallel step, that USAID convene a meeting with potential country-level participants and MOE representatives to engage in exploratory discussions. The agenda for such a discussion would include the identification and selection of a smaller working group of representatives who would assist and facilitate design, and outline a process for moving forward.

The negotiating process would continue to evolve as new inputs are received and considered. The goal would be to focus on the consolidation of the program within a selected institution(s) so that a project proposal could be developed between representatives of each lead institution and USAID. The program design would include mechanisms for coordination between the lead institutions and the country-level institutions. The parties would also agree on mechanisms for contracting and delivery of services. These aspects of the CETT would need to contemplate the gradual

independence of the country-level institutions as they acquire the capacities to assume greater responsibilities in the implementation of the CETT.

SUMMARY

The breadth of capacities required for hosting and managing the Central American CETT could be best provided by a consortium of institutions. While recognizing that a consortium model could be complex and costly to implement, the institutional capacities assessment team emphasizes that a viable CETT in Central America must be built on country-level institutions working in a network with a group of production-level institutions that collaborate to develop the program. Annex G provides summaries of the particular strengths and potential contributions to the CETT of each institution evaluated. These include strengths in management, teacher training, ICT, reading instruction, research, and diagnostic and performance assessment capabilities.

When successfully implemented, the Central American CETT would provide leadership in the development of a strong technical program to be delivered to the countries of the region. At the same time, it would offer an opportunity to participating institutions to learn in the process and to strengthen and extend their capabilities. For example, FEPADE's managerial capacities would provide important institutional strengthening for UPN in areas such as project administration and private-sector partnering. In this way, the consortium model would help realize a level of institutional impact that could, in turn, encourage, advance, and improve the capacity to bring about educational reform in each country and the region as a whole. In addition to successful institutional and public-sector partnership, the sustainability of the CETT would also depend, in part, on building lasting relationships with and receiving continuing support from the private sector.

ANNEXES

- A. Scope of Work**
- B. Work Plan**
- C. Organizational sub-definitions**
- D. Technical sub-definitions**
- E. Research Instruments Used in the Field**
- F. List of Contacts**
- G. Institutional Profiles**

Annex A: Scope of Work

Scope of Work
Central America Assessment
Phase II

I Introduction

This Scope of Work describes the second phase of a two-phase assessment of teacher training needs and capacities in Central America. The previous (Phase I) assessment focused on: (a) identifying teacher training needs and capacities, especially with regard to reading instruction, and (b) identifying potential institutions within the region with sufficient capacity to serve as a Center of Excellence for Teacher Training (CETT). The goals of this Phase II institutional assessment are to: (a) expand and systematize information on the recommended institutions capacities to serve as hosts or contribute as counterparts on the CETT and (b) propose and evaluate models for how the CETT is to be organized. This information will be used to facilitate design of the Central American CETT.

II Background

Presidential Summit Initiative

At the April, 2001, Summit of the Americas meeting, President George W. Bush announced a new initiative to establish three regional Centers in the Caribbean, Central America, and the Andean region of South America with the goal of improving reading instruction through enhanced teacher training. The three Centers are to be established in existing institutions in the Caribbean, Central America, and the Andean region of South America. It is expected that about 15,000 teachers will benefit from training over a four-year period.

While it is understood that a wide range of systemic issues impact the quality of reading instruction, the focus of the Center of Excellence will be teacher training. The goal will be to improve reading instruction in the early grades (K-3) by upgrading the knowledge and pedagogical skills of poorly qualified teachers. Teachers and administrators who work with poor populations in rural and urban areas will be targeted.

It is expected that the Centers will use a training-of-trainers approach to reach more teachers and administrators, will provide a clearinghouse of teacher materials, and will use information and computer technology as appropriate to facilitate information-sharing between institutions and to increase the scope of teachers' access to training and materials.

USAID is developing this project with guidance from an advisory panel of U.S. and Latin American experts. The Department of Education, the Organization of American States, Ministries of Education, business and citizen groups, faith-based organizations, international donors, and other hemispheric governments are being enlisted to form a partnership with USAID for the implementation of the program. USAID is soliciting

matching funds from the private sector and will develop a mechanism for continuing to solicit and manage the funds and, in the long-term, provide sustainability to the Centers.

Central American CETT

Countries to be served

Once fully established, the Central American CETT is expected to serve teachers in seven countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, and the Dominican Republic. (The Dominican Republic will be served by the Central American CETT because the country is Spanish-speaking. English-speaking Belize is to be served by the Caribbean CETT.) Disadvantaged Mexican teachers may also be beneficiaries of the Central American CETT. The initial design will be to start small (limited number of countries and interventions) and expand the project as the efficacy of the initial intervention is demonstrated.

Lessons from the Caribbean CETT

The Central American Center of Excellence is the second Center under development. While design discussions are still on-going for the Caribbean CETT, at this point it appears that the Caribbean CETT will consist of five components:

- (a) identification or development and distribution of diagnostic/performance assessment tools;
- (b) identification or development and distribution of teacher and learning materials;
- (c) in-service teacher training (with follow-up)—this is expected to involve a training-of-trainers program so that teachers and school administrators can take the training back to their communities;
- (d) use of participatory action research to promote collaboration and ensure relevance of CETT programs; and
- (e) appropriate application of information and computer technology to other components—such as linking teacher training institutions, think tanks, schools, teachers, and universities through an Internet portal to share materials, successful practices and “lessons learned” and providing teacher training via distance education.

From the Phase I needs assessment for Central America (see summary below and full report), it appears that these same components are needed in Central America with differing details and emphasis than in the Caribbean.

Phase I Assessment Findings: Teacher Training Needs

After reviewing relevant documents and interviewing a broad array of stakeholders, including teachers, teachers’ unions, ministers of education, university and teacher college faculty, and others involved with reading education, the assessment team

identified the following teacher training needs with regard to improving reading instruction in Central America:

a) Training Approaches Needed

• **In-service training program** that:

- i. Links to classroom reality (i.e., provides practical teaching skills over theory and content), thus reducing the disconnect between theory and practice
- ii. Focuses on strengthening teachers' knowledge and ability to use pedagogically effective methods (rather than developing their content knowledge)
- iii. Emphasizes learning by doing
- iv. Includes a follow-up to the training to ensure teachers practice the skills taught
- v. Involves stakeholders (teachers, administrators, and others) in design, implementation and evaluation of teacher training/teacher education programs
- vi. Includes training for administrators

b) Skill Areas Needed

- i. Methods for teaching reading
- ii. Evaluation of student performance related to reading
- iii. Identification of students' special needs
- iv. Methodologies for enhancing students' reading readiness abilities (esp. constructivist)
- v. Strengthening of classroom management skills
- vi. Bilingual education; teaching reading in a multilingual or indigenous context
- vii. Training (and resources) to shrink the digital divide
- viii. Utilization of audiovisual equipment and materials (low priority for CETT)
- ix. Reading comprehension—for unknown percentage of teachers with inadequate reading skills

c) Other Needs

- i. Materials for teaching reading
- ii. Installing and utilizing school libraries
- iii. Resources to shrink the digital divide
- iv. Norms for curricula and faculty requirements (beyond the scope of the CETT)

d) Design Constraints

Design of the CETT must take into account the cultural, geographic and political constraints of the region, including:

- i. The multilingual and indigenous context of some Central American countries requires that the special training needs of teachers and the educational needs of students be addressed by the training design and content.
- ii. The design of the Center must also address how to reach teachers in remote areas, including appropriate distance learning technologies.

Preliminary Design Recommendation

The Phase I assessment team recommended considering a model for organizing the CETT that would draw on the different strengths of several institutions, such as through a consortium of institutions, a network, or a hub and spokes and arrangement.

Institutions under Consideration

Seven institutions in Central America have been identified for follow-up: six institutions recommended for follow-up by the Phase I team and a seventh institution—*Madre Maestra* in the Dominican Republic—identified for logistical and political reasons by the larger team in Washington. The seven institutions to be assessed further are:

INCAE (Costa Rica)
Fundación Omar Dengo (Costa Rica)
Madre Maestra (Dominican Republic)
FEPADE (El Salvador)
Universidad Del Valle (Guatemala)
Universidad Nacional Pedagógica (Honduras)
ILCE (Mexico)

These institutions were selected based on: administrative and management capacity; financial oversight and grant management competence; regional credibility and experience; interest in the project; and relevant experience with teacher training, project management, creating and managing education technology programs, research and policy formulation, beneficiary populations, obtaining counterpart contributions, social marketing and advocacy, and community mobilization and grassroots development.

III Scope of Work

Goal

The goals of this institutional assessment are to:

- 1) Expand and systematize information on the recommended institutions, including information about (a) each institution's capacity to serve as host to the CETT, and (b) how each might contribute as an in-country counterpart.
- 2) Propose and evaluate models for how the Central American Center of Excellence is to be structured, including identify who—or what structure—has the credibility and capacity to provide the needed services in a cost-effective manner.

Key Questions to Consider

- 1) For each institution, investigate the capacity to work regionally and provide CETT components:**

- a) In each of the following important areas, what are the specific experience, capacity, and interest of the institution to serve as a regional Center of Excellence? What is the quality of its programs? What is its vision? What is its credibility across the region? What is its management capacity? What areas would need to be developed to create regional capacity?
- Reading instruction, including in a multilingual or indigenous context
 - Teacher training, including in-service teacher training
 - Serving the target population of primary grade teachers and school administrators in urban and rural poor communities, including in remote areas
 - Materials production, including screen, produce, and distribute materials
 - Distance learning
 - Reducing the disconnect between theory and practice, including providing follow-up to training
 - Applying research toward improvement of teacher training
- b) What are areas of strength and/or excess capability in which the institution could potentially serve the CETT?

The following areas of investigation are provided as guidance in answering the above question:

1. Capacity for research and innovation

- a) Commitment and interest of leaders and management to innovation, change, and the vision, needs and changes that the Centers of Excellence represent; include examples, when available, of leadership's past commitment to change
- b) Capacity to innovate, institutionalize, and sustain pilot initiatives in teacher training

2. Organization

- a) Financial structure: sources of funds
- b) Personnel: numbers, categories, qualifications
- c) Existing regional outreach and possibilities of expansion
- c) Availability of private-sector funds and capacity to generate new agreements

3. Teacher Training Programs Offered

- a) Curricula for each program, duration of each, capacity per program, format, methodologies for training, and teaching/learning style promoted
- b) Accreditation of programs
- c) Evaluation of programs (summary of findings of latest available report)
- d) Accessibility to teachers and schools administrators within the target countries which the Center of Excellence is intended to serve
- e) Capacity for follow-up

4. Resources

- a) Available physical and material resources to support residential and distance learning (facilities, libraries, reading laboratories and resource centers, technology infrastructure including computers, internet capacity)
- b) Human resources in programs related to those of interest to CETT
- c) Dissemination of knowledge and research findings: publications, newsletters, radio, TV, audio or videocassettes

5. *Population served*

- a) Population and areas served annually
- b) Profile of students trained/served: level of general education, urban/rural, gender
- c) Experience with serving target populations of primary grade teachers and school administrators in disadvantaged communities

2) Drawing on these seven institutions, what are possible approaches to implementing, structuring, and managing the Central American CETT?

- a) What approach would the institutions recommend for initiating the Central American Center of Excellence? What institutions do they propose be involved? How do they propose they work with each other, regional partners and key stakeholders to develop a CETT? How do they propose this program be coordinated across the region? What mechanisms or structures are needed, and what will be the process to develop them?
- b) What approach would the USAID Missions recommend for initiating, coordinating, and structuring the Central American Center of Excellence? What role, if any, do they see for the Programa de Reforma Educativa en América Latina (PREAL) in coordinating, brokering, or otherwise working with the CETT?
- c) How might entities not directly hosting the Center participate?
- d) What is the interest level of the institutions in working together in the CETT?
- e) What would be the political credibility across the region of different organizational structures for the CETT? For example, in other countries, what do they think of CETT being in --?
- f) Which institutions and individuals are the key political stakeholders in the region? The key leadership? What political implications might different approaches to implementing, structuring, and managing the CETT bring into play? What is the political will to support the CETT?
- g) What are the vision, interest, and commitment of the Ministries of Education to the CETT? Of other regional stakeholders such as teachers' unions or other

- teacher training institutions? What will be the strategy for engaging these stakeholders in the CETT?
- h) What policies will need to be in place for a Center to function? What is the willingness and flexibility to support those policies?
 - i) What in-country financial resources are available to help the sustainability of the CETT?
 - j) What model for coordinating the CETT might: (a) allow the project to start small and build out; (b) provide regional credibility; and (c) be cost effective?
 - k) What will be the strategy for engaging the U.S. and Central American private sector and NGOs in the sustainability of the Center of Excellence? Will they have a role in guiding the Center?
 - l) What will be the strategy and role for ICT in the CETT? What will be the strategy and role for Distance Learning in the CETT, including using ICT and other technologies to provide access to materials and/or training to outlying locations?

III. Deliverables

- A. Facilitated working session attended by BEPS, USAID, and assessment team members to present and discuss the team's findings and interactively develop a concept for the Central American CETT **before February 1**.
- B. Summary of findings (10 pages or less) **due by Friday, February 1**, that outlines key findings and recommendations in response to the two key questions (1 and 2 above).
- C. A 20-30 page report that describes a working design for the Central American CETT with focus on recommending one or more organizational structures as developed in the working session and includes:
 - 1) Summary of recommended structures for the CETT with the team's evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of each structure
 - 2) Roles that specific institutions would play in providing the different components of the CETT and explanation of how and by what entity the CETT will be coordinated
 - 3) Summary of relevant institutional capacities
 - 4) List of meetings held

IV. Team Composition

Teacher Training expert, Lionel Valdivia
Organizational Development expert, David Schrier

Annex B: Work Plan

PROPOSED WORK PLAN

I. PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVES

Carry out the Phase Two Assessment, developing a profile of each institution identified by the Phase One as potential host for the Center of Excellence. Among the areas to be investigated at each institution are:

- Assess the motivation to support the Center, and the general political will to embrace the type of innovation and change a Center will bring;
- Identify and document the institution's experience with Teacher Training in reading instruction, including programs offered and evaluations.
- Characterize the institutional experience in working with disadvantaged teachers and communities, and the ability to translate training theory into practice
- Assess its regional experience and the capacity to support residential and distance learning;
- Characterize experience with research and policy making, assessing the institutional relationship with authorities at the national and regional levels in terms of influence and acceptability;
- Assess its connection and experience with the private sector and donor communities, and potential counterpart contributions to the Center.

1. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A two-member team will conduct the Phase Two institutional assessment fieldwork in the Central American Region. The team is composed by Teacher Training expert, Leonel Valdivia and Organizational Development expert and Team Leader, David Schrier.

2.1 Countries and Institutions To Be Visited

ILCE (Mexico)
INCAE (Costa Rica/Nicaragua)
Fundación Omar Dengo (Costa Rica)
PUCMM (Dominican Republic)
INTEC (Dominican Republic)
Universidad Pedagógica Nacional (Honduras)
Universidad del Valle (Guatemala)
FEPADE (El Salvador)

2.2 Key Research Questions

The following primary questions will guide the assessment:

- Does the specific institution have the capability of being a virtual or a physical Center of Excellence?
- If the Central American Center was a consortium of institutions with specific capabilities, which task would be assigned to each specific institution?
- How is the institution reaching out to disadvantaged/poorer communities? How does this approach differ from the work with other communities?
- To what extent are distance learning techniques and/or ICT presently used for teacher training and/or for primary education? What improvements could be made for more effective use (including other technologies)?
- Which Central American teacher training institutions potentially have sufficient capacity to support a Regional Center of Excellence for Teacher Training, including training-of-trainers? What are strengths and limitations of each?

2.4 Key Data Collection Techniques

- Interviews
- Informal meetings
- Visits

3. DELIVERABLES

1. Facilitated working session attended by BEPS, USAID, and assessment team members to present and discuss the team's findings and interactively develop a concept for the Central American CETT before February 1.
2. Summary of findings (10 pages or less) due by Friday, February 1, that outlines key findings and recommendations in response to the two key questions (1 and 2 above).
3. A 20-30 page report that describes a working design for the Central American CETT with focus on recommending one or more organizational structures as developed in the working session and includes:
 - a) Summary of recommended structures for the CETT with the team's evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of each structure
 - b) Roles that specific institutions would play in providing the different components of the CETT and explanation of how and by what entity the CETT will be coordinated
 - c) Summary of relevant institutional capacities
 - d) List of meetings held

4. SUPERVISION

- The Central American assessment team will be responsible for design, implementation and production of the report. It will assume the assessment implementation, data analysis, presentation, and report writing.
- As BEPS/LAC Activity Coordinator, Ms. Antonieta Harwood is directly responsible for overall quality and performance of the Central American assessment team, liaison needs between USAID and the Team, and quality assurance of the final report.
- Dr. Don Graybill, BEPS Project Director, will provide general oversight, support and quality monitoring of the sub-task order.
- David Evans is the designated LAC/EHR CTO for this sub-task.

5. SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Activities	Dates
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare work plan• Prepare instruments• Arrange for interviews• Field visits	January 1-4, 2001 January 8-11 January 1-11 January 12-29
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analysis of the data	Jan. 30-Feb. 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare draft report	February 4-12
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Present draft report to USAID	February 15

Annex C: Organizational Sub-definitions

ANNEX C: Organizational Sub-Definitions

1.Capacity to team successfully	a. The ability to maintain an open-minded listening style when ideas are exchanged.
	b. The degree of openness for being influenced by another.
	c. The ability to express concern for others' points of view.
	d. The ability to set aside institutional agendas in favor of a greater network objective.
	e. Interpersonal competence distributed among managers.
2.Correspondence of mission and values	a. Track record for action research and/or starting small and building out.
	b. Track record building relationships with stakeholders in education.
	c. Track record with regional networks in Central America.
	d. Track record on outreach to indigenous and minority populations.
	e. Track record reaching out to economically marginal populations.
3.Institutional talent and relative strength of expertise	a. Margin of potential contribution compared to the next best level of performance in a CETT key performance area.
	b. Track record compared to the next best level of performance in a CETT key performance area.
	c. Level of thought with respect to the numbers of staff showing a high degree of talent, and institutional commitment to maintaining achievement in that area.
	d. Margin of potential contribution compared to the next best level of performance in a CETT key performance area.
4.Commitment of senior managers	a. Intrinsic desire of the board of directors, rector, appropriate department heads and staff to accomplish the CETT program task.
	b. Track record of the board of directors, rector, appropriate department and staff in accomplishing similar tasks.
	c. Extrinsic vs. intrinsic motives regarding similar tasks (whether track record on similar work was based on income or continues regardless of funding).
	d. Presence of language in the mission statement and/or orientation of management to support the CETT Task.
5.Administrative/financial capability	a. Track record managing USAID contracts or other donors' projects.
	b. Staff experience and capability in bookkeeping in project environments.
	c. Diversified reliance on multiple sources of income.

	d. Ability to manage accounting staff in a project task environment and handling of those dual-reporting relationships.
6. Absorptive capacity (non-financial organizational capabilities)	a. Ease of performing under contract in a project environment.
	b. Degree of capability of key staff required achieving the task and how dependent the task is to those specific human resources (where provider institutions are under consideration for specific tasks).
	c. Key staff capability and level of achievement for a specific task, their desire to commit to the task, and the likelihood that key staff will stay to complete it.
	d. Number of years of key staff at the institution.
	e. Relationship of the key staff to the institution (full-time staff, adjunct faculty, etc.), and whether those key staff have stronger allegiances to other institutions.
7. Human resource base	a. Capability of the staff both on project performance and overall throughout the institution.
	b. Staff knowledge of new equipment and techniques to use it in project-related applications (secretarial, graphics, library, word-processing equipment and servicing, photocopy and document production, etc.)
	c. Key staff capability and level of achievement for that task, including the degree of attachment to the institution (adjunct faculty, contract labor, full-time staff, etc.) and the likelihood that they will stay to complete it.
8. Broad-Based Institutional Support	a. Secretarial, graphics, library, word processing equipment and servicing, photocopy and fax capabilities.
	b. Ease of performing in a project environment under contract and related impact (ranging from causing potential conflicts to likelihood of creating broad-based team support from departments or organizational components outside project task arena).
	c. Consequence and impact of any increased need to contract out, reach into others' overhead budget, or other resource strain.
9. Potential institutional impact	a. CETT impact on staff capabilities (over life of project).
	b. CETT impact on improving technology and related application capacity.
	c. CETT impact on student education (resulting in potential increase in the quality of education).
	d. CETT impact on breadth of population.

Annex D: Technical Sub-definitions

ANNEX D: Technical Sub-definitions

1. Reading Instruction Expertise	a. Historical experience
	b. Research related to reading
	c. Volume and quality of materials produced
	d. Availability of assessment tools and data to measure performance
	e. Faculty qualifications and experience in reading development
2. Teacher Training	a. Historical experience with in-service teacher training
	b. Diversity of approaches and delivery systems utilized
	c. Training planned based on training needs assessment
	d. Evaluation and training follow up mechanisms in place
	e. "Trainings of trainers" regularly conducted
3. Diagnostic and Performance Assessment	a. Historical experience with diagnostic and performance assessment
	b. Qualifications of staff in diagnostic and performance assessment and related sciences
	c. Volume and quality of publications
	d. Dissemination of results for classroom application
	e. Specific experience in K-3 diagnostic and performance assessment
4. Research	a. Historical experience in educational applied research
	b. Diversity of methodologies applied (quantitative, qualitative, etc.)
	c. Proximity of research studies to classroom practice
	d. Volume of specific K-3 research
	e. Qualifications of research staff
5.Distance Learning and ICT Applications	a. Historical experience in distance learning and ICT
	b. Diversity and complementarity of media utilized
	c. Appropriateness of technology to disadvantaged schools
	d. Distance learning/ICT utilized that is specific to K-3
	e. Follow-up and impact evaluation capabilities in distance learning/ICT applications
6.Country Educational Environment	a. School system reform in progress
	b. Government commitment to educational reform
	c. GNP investment in education equal or above region average
	d. Level of private-sector involvement in education
	e. Performance assessment mechanisms in place

Annex E: Research Instruments Used During Field Visits

ANNEX E: Research Instruments

In each of the following important areas, what are the specific experience, capacity, and interest of the institution to serve as a regional Center of Excellence? What is the quality of its programs? What is its vision? What is its credibility across the region? What is its management capacity? What areas would need to be developed to create regional capacity?

- Reading instruction, including in a multilingual or indigenous context
 - Teacher training, including in-service teacher training
 - Serving the target population of primary grade teachers and school administrators in urban and rural poor communities, including in remote areas
 - Materials production, including screen, produce, and distribute materials
 - Distance learning
 - Reducing the disconnect between theory and practice, including providing follow-up to training
 - Applying research toward improvement of teacher training
- c) What are areas of strength and/or excess capability in which the institution could potentially serve the CETT?

The following areas of investigation are provided as guidance in answering the above questions:

6. Capacity for research and innovation

- d) Commitment and interest of leaders and management to innovation, change, and the vision, needs and changes that the Centers of Excellence represent; include examples, when available, of leadership's past commitment to change
- e) Capacity to innovate, institutionalize, and sustain pilot initiatives in teacher training

7. Organization

- d) Financial structure: sources of funds
- e) Personnel: numbers, categories, qualifications
- f) Existing regional outreach and possibilities of expansion
- f) Availability of private-sector funds and capacity to generate new agreements

8. Teacher Training Programs Offered

- f) Curricula for each program, duration of each, capacity per program, format, methodologies for training, and teaching/learning style promoted
- g) Accreditation of programs
- h) Evaluation of programs (summary of findings of latest available report)
- i) Accessibility to teachers and schools administrators within the target countries which the Center of Excellence is intended to serve
- j) Capacity for follow-up

9. Resources

- d) Available physical and material resources to support residential and distance learning (facilities, libraries, reading laboratories and resource centers, technology infrastructure including computers, internet capacity)
- e) Human resources in programs related to those of interest to CETT
- f) Dissemination of knowledge and research findings: publications, newsletters, radio, TV, audio or videocassettes

10. Population served

- d) Population and areas served annually
- e) Profile of students trained/served: level of general education, urban/rural, gender
- f) Experience with serving target populations of primary grade teachers and school administrators in disadvantaged communities

11. Regarding the CETT

- m) What approach would the institutions recommend for initiating the Central American Center of Excellence? What institutions do they propose be involved? How do they propose they work with each other, regional partners and key stakeholders to develop a CETT? How do they propose this program be coordinated across the region? What mechanisms or structures are needed, and what will be the process to develop them?
- n) What is the interest level of the institutions in working together in the CETT?
- o) What would be the political credibility across the region of different organizational structures for the CETT? For example, in other countries, what do they think of CETT being in --?
- p) Which institutions and individuals are the key political stakeholders in the region? The key leadership? What political implications might different approaches to implementing, structuring, and managing the CETT bring into play? What is the political will to support the CETT?
- q) What in-country financial resources are available to help the sustainability of the CETT?
- r) What will be the strategy for engaging the U.S. and Central American private sector and NGOs in the sustainability of the Center of Excellence? Will they have a role in guiding the Center?
- s) What will be the strategy and role for ICT in the CETT? What will be the strategy and role for Distance Learning in the CETT, including using ICT and other technologies to provide access to materials and/or training to outlying locations?

Annex F: Contact List

ANNEX F: List of Contacts

Costa Rica

INCAE

Ernesto Ayala, Director International Relations
Fernando Valverde, Systems Director
Thomas Block, Librarian
Juan C. Rappaccioli, Financial Director

FOD

Clotilde Fonseca, Executive Director
Andrea Anfossi, Education ICT Program Director
Carlos Fernández, Administrative Director
Eduardo Monje, Systems Director
Magaly Zuñiga, Research Director
Ivan Solis, Office of Budget and Accounting
Lynda Nuñez, Human Resources
Jacqueline Lobo, Director of Accounting
Juan Carlos Herrero, Web Master and Network Director

Dominican Republic

INTEC

Sandra González, Director of Education Center
Mercedes Hernández, Adjunct Professor
Miriam Bobadilla, Administration and Human Resources
Altagracia Lopez, Dean of Education

PUCMM

Radhames Mejia, Vice Rector
Dulce Rodriguez, Academic Vice Rector
Francisco Polanco, Teacher Training Director
Ana Margarita Hache, Education Professor
Liliana Montenegro, Education Professor
Alina Bello, Practice Teaching Supervisor
Nestor Castellano, Director of Technology and Systems
Mirna Diaz Coranado, Director of Administration and Finance (PID)
Sergio H. Fana, Assistant Project Director (PID)
Roberto Gonzalez Viñas, Office of Projects (PID)
José Cuello de la Cruz, Internal Accounting Audit

Emilia Liriano, Assistant Director Executive Offices
Cesar Ballenilla, Coordinator of the Education Area
Mu-Kien Adriana Sang, Executive Director of the PID Project

El Salvador

FEPADE

Enrique Suárez, Executive Director
Joaquin Samayoa, Education, Research and Training Director
Mari Carmen Moran, Training Manager
Celia Moran, Publications Director
Alberto Varillas, Research Officer
Betty Portillo, CRA Project Director
Eugenia Suay de Castrillo, Administrator and Finance Director
Rudolfo Galeas, Systems Engineer
Ernesto Gomez, Systems
Rolando Garcia, Information Systems

Honduras

UPN

Carlos Avila, Minister of Education (of incoming Maduro administration)
Ramón Salgado, Rector
Azucena Cruz, Academic Vice-Rector
Maria del Carmen Figueroa, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities
Iris Erazgo, Director of the Post-Grade Department
Renan Rapalo Castellanos, Director of the Department of Measurement of Educational Quality (UMCE)
Leslie Mejia, Director of the Center of Research and Educational Innovation
Ernestina Orellana, Director of Distance Education
Gloria de Espinosa, Coordinator of Preschool Education Certificate
Suyapa Padilla, Coordinator of Special Education Program
Víctor Manuel Ramos, Director of UPN Publishing
María Chávez, Director of Research
Juan Paz, Director of the Information System
Marco Tulio Ávila, Deputy Director for Information Systems
Julio Navarro Perdomo, Director of Evaluation
Elia Argentina del Cid de Andrade, Chief of Administration and Financial Officer

Guatemala

UVG

Roberto Moreno Godoy, President
Ricardo Antellon, Director of Development
Yetilu Baessa, Research Center Director
Edgar Celada, Executive Director PROESUR
Ricardo Furlan, Director of Technology
Jacqueline García Solórzano de León, Dean of the Faculty of Education
Eduardo Álvarez Massis, Dean of the Science Faculty
Luis Masaya, Technology Department
Victoria Eugenia Rosales, Administrative Director
Jack Shuster, Biology and Entomology
Michael Gray, Biology and Entomology

USAID

Wende DuFlon, Education Officer

Mexico

ILCE

Jorge Duran, Regional Cooperation Director
Juan Portilla, Public Relations Officer
Patricia Ávila, Research Director
Cesar Morales, Technology Department Director
Alejandro Acuña, Director of Document Center
Oscar Francisco López Martínez, Director of Distance Education Technology and Webmaster

Annex G: Institutional Profiles

ANNEX G: Institutional Profiles

FEPADE (Fundación Empresarial para el Desarrollo Educativo/ Business Foundation for Educational Development), El Salvador

1. Target Population

The target population includes Salvadoran education policymakers, El Salvador's private sector, NGOs, leadership groups and the Salvadoran society at large. High-school graduates come to FEPADE to pursue technical education in associate's degree programs at its four campuses. FEPADE also serves primary- and secondary-school teachers at target schools, district supervisors, teacher trainers, school system administrators, as well as school councils and staffs in disadvantaged areas.

2. Brief Description of Programs

FEPADE is a major player in Salvadoran education service provision and policymaking. The school provides post-secondary technical education at its four campuses. FEPADE offers master's degrees in Business Administration and a certificate program in International Business. The school has been a leading education reform supporter through a six-year, USAID-funded Education Reform Support project through which it conducts in-service teacher training by way of direct in-school interventions. Other programs include the government of El Salvador's EDUCO program, the World Bank-funded CRA project and a model school program. FEPADE also runs two action research programs in reading achievement, as well as yearly reading promotion events through a book collection and distribution campaign. FEPADE has undertaken several studies on learning achievement factors in basic and secondary education, and production of regular publications (e.g., ABC magazine) and resource materials for teachers.

3. Advantages

a) Organizational

FEPADE has a well-established track record as a USAID partner. The school has also been the recipient of project monies from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the World Bank and the PREAL project. The IDB project was the first time a Salvadoran government project was managed by a private foundation. Currently, FEPADE's budget is approximately US \$2.5 million, although it has risen to as high as US \$4 million in recent years. The overhead rate has declined overall from the early 1990s to the year 2000, although 2001 and 2002 rates are projected to increase.

FEPADE operates in a favorable country education environment where education-sector leadership is committed to education reform. FEPADE is gaining regional credibility as an education reform advocate and a facilitator of private-sector

involvement in education. FEPADE's regional aspiration is clear in its mission statement, where commitment to education is pledged not only to the people of El Salvador, but also to Central America as a whole. The institution is also involved in regional and international networking activities, including with universities in the U.S.

FEPADE has excellent absorption capacity. All indications are that senior management and key middle management staff would bring vision and commitment consistent with CETT-required research and educational development.

b) Technical

FEPADE has extensive experience in hands-on involvement in the education reform process both in policymaking and school performance improvement. The highly trained technical staff has extensive experience in direct in-school interventions, and in diagnostic and learning achievement research, but does not have reading instruction experience.

4. Disadvantages

a) Organizational

No serious organizational disadvantage was apparent to the assessment team.

b) Technical

At present, FEPADE does not have specific in-house expertise in methodologies for reading instruction. The institution has limited expertise in pedagogical models for the early grades. There is minimal installed capacity for distance learning and educational technology applications.

5. Conclusions for the CETT

FEPADE's capacity to team successfully, the correspondence of its mission with the CETT vision, and the commitment of senior management to CETT goals make FEPADE an excellent candidate for taking part in the production-level group of institutions. While FEPADE's experience in teacher training and in-school interventions would add value to the CETT, the assessment team was especially impressed with the strong managerial capacity and private-sector partnering experience at FEPADE, as well as its institutional talent for coordinating with other institutions.

FOD (Fundación Omar Dengo/ Omar Dengo Foundation), Costa Rica

1. Target population

The target population includes primary-school teachers and students at over 500 public schools participating in the online school designed and operated with the foundation's technical assistance. The school also reaches teachers participating in regular in-service training courses in education technology at Fundación Omar Dengo. Additionally, Costa Rican education policymakers take part in activities offered by the foundation.

2. Brief description of program

The foundation is the leading institution in Costa Rica in the application of ICT to strengthen quality of education and classroom learning in primary schools. For 14 years, Omar Dengo has been involved in ICT applications, which have been used to provide in-service teacher training. Through the ICT Education Program (Programa de Informática Educativa), the foundation assists the Ministry of Education in the design and operation of a large online school network offering teaching enrichment resources in all subject areas. To date, close to 500 schools, almost 7,000 teachers and over 250,000 school children are involved in, and benefiting from, the network. Parallel to this effort, Omar Dengo is assisting the Ministry in the operation of EDUNET, a national program designed to expand Internet resources in the Costa Rican school system.

3. Advantages

a) Organizational

Fundación Omar Dengo is a self-sustaining private organization whose main source of income is the sale of its services. Its main client is the Costa Rican Ministry of Education. The school has strong ties with the private sector in Costa Rica in part due to the dynamic leadership of the executive director. Omar Dengo does have some experience as a U.S. government grantee, as FOD was initially launched with USAID local currency funds.

b) Technical

Omar Dengo has long-term experience in the design and implementation of distance learning through online learning networks. The school also conducts direct in-school interventions with the goal of improving classroom instruction. Omar Dengo demonstrates extensive experience in teacher training through ICT.

4. Disadvantages

a) Organizational

There is an absence of physical facilities and ICT capacities at FOD. The foundation has received a donation of a hangar-type building from the Motorola Corporation that it intends to turn into a training center, but this building is currently only in the design phase. The limited staff resources are problematic at Omar Dengo. The absorptive capacity for CETT involvement is poor as staff is currently committed to multiple projects.

b) Technical

This visit allowed some important clarifications to the initial assessment report. Notably, Omar Dengo does not have in-house technological capabilities for the production of learning materials. Its expertise lies mainly in advising on the design and operation of the Ministry's online school network. Therefore, contrary to the earlier perception, the institution's technical expertise is much more theoretical than practical in nature. There is limited experience in both reading instruction and knowledge of teaching methodologies for the early grades. There is also an almost total reliance on ICT applications with limited experience in face-to-face interventions.

5. Conclusions for the CETT

The assessment team considers that, at present, Fundación Omar Dengo does not have the human resources or the technical capacity to play a large role in the operation of the CETT in the region. The team does recommend that Fundación Omar Dengo be considered as a country-level institution for the implementation of the CETT in Costa Rica.

ILCE (Instituto Latinoamericano para la Comunicación Educativa/ Latin American Institute for Educational Communication), Mexico

1. Target population

The target population at ILCE includes primary- and secondary-school teachers, as well as 300,000 plus students participating in Telesecundaria and Red Escolar programs in Mexico and several other Latin American countries. Several million teachers, educators, and the general public benefit from hundreds of ILCE cable and open-broadcast TV transmissions and online services. ILCE also reaches education policymakers and experts in Mexico and a number of Latin American countries. Web surfers throughout the world use the many services available at ILCE's several Web sites.

2. Brief description of program

In operation for many years, Red Escolar has become a consolidated package of in-school teaching enrichment materials. The full Red Escolar package, including the EDUSAT antenna, decoder, TV set and VCR, and a collection of ten CDs with reference materials, costs US \$1,200. Once connected to the Red Escolar, teachers in the schools have unlimited access to a large number of programs, reference resources, teaching guides, formal training courses, and links to worldwide resources. Likewise, children have access to a large variety of learning aids, drilling exercises and competitions, among others. A large portion of Red Escolar programs and resources are designed to encourage teamwork and cooperative learning as well as to reinforce teacher/pupil interaction. Red Escolar is not designed to teach children how to read, as a minimum level of literacy is required, though children below the third grade can benefit from Red Escolar materials through their teachers.

ILCE's research department is a key component of the institute's operations. The department employs 20 high-caliber professionals distributed in five technical areas: Psychology, Pedagogy, Communication, Sociology and Systems Engineering. The department provides research support for various purposes: curriculum design, distance learning needs assessment, education technologies field-testing, and evaluation of interventions, among others. Over the years, considerable research resources have been assigned to diagnosing the problems associated with distance learning and teaching. This research has focused on the student at the receiving end, including comparing the effectiveness of distance learning with face-to-face instruction. Since 1998, the department has been involved in a major multi-country study headed by the University of North Texas. The study looks at teachers' and students' attitudes with respect to computer-based instruction in the U.S., Europe, and Mexico.

3. Advantages

a) Organizational

ILCE demonstrates strong administrative and financial management experience. The availability of world-class specialists in educational technology is a definite strength. ILCE is a self-sustaining institution whose main source of income is the sale of services. Its main client is the government of Mexico and, to a lesser extent, other regional governments, the private sector and international development agencies. ILCE is a regional organization presided over by a board of directors representing each of the member countries, including all participants in the Central American CETT.

b) Technical

ILCE's multiple technological assets and human resources were fully described in the initial assessment report. This information was confirmed during this visit with additional insights into the operations of Red Escolar and the Department of Research. This institution appears as the undisputed leader among the eight institutions assessed in educational technology applications for distance learning. ILCE displays widely acknowledged knowledge and skill in the field of distance education and educational technology throughout Latin America.

4. Disadvantages

a) Organizational

The follow-up assessment team identified no major organizational weaknesses.

b) Technical

ILCE demonstrates limited experience and in-house expertise in the teaching of reading and reading preparedness for primary-school students. While expertise in technology-based instruction is solid, it is not complemented by face-to-face instruction expertise, which is not widely available.

5. Conclusions for the CETT

ILCE has the human and technological resources, and regional credibility, necessary to be a partner of the CETT in the area of distance learning and educational technology application.

INCAE (Instituto Centroamericano de Administración de Empresas/ Central American Institute for Business Administration), Costa Rica/Nicaragua

1. Target Population

The target population includes senior Latin American business and government leaders interested in pursuing a master's degree in Business Administration at its campuses in Alajuela, Costa Rica and Managua, Nicaragua. This past academic year, INCAE had a student population of 120 in Costa Rica and 80 in Nicaragua. INCAE also targets business, governments and international organizations for whom the institute provides consulting and research services.

2. Brief Description of Programs

INCAE conducts a two-year residential master's degree program in Business Administration at its Costa Rica and Nicaragua campuses in which it uses the Harvard Business School case study methodology. The institute also manages the Center for Economic Competitiveness as a research and economic think tank for Central America. INCAE runs short courses on various aspects of business development, economic and social policy and the like for Latin American businesses and governments. INCAE has played an important role in facilitating country- and region-level policy changes in a wide range of areas such as export promotion, private-sector participation in education, and public-private partnerships.

3. Advantages

a) Organizational

INCAE is highly motivated to participate in the CETT. The institution's track record demonstrates commitment to innovation and change. It has a successful record as a USAID partner. The institute has grown its endowment since 1964, using its offices in 13 countries, representation in Washington and its alumni network, which includes executives in many Latin American corporations. One of the goals of the institution involves engaging in fundraising activities with the private sector. INCAE has depth of experience in personnel, especially with respect to managing regional networks and large regional projects designed for sustainable success in the long term.

b) Technical

INCAE is one of the most prestigious training institutions in business administration in Latin America. Its faculty, staff and consultants are highly trained and experienced. INCAE's teaching and research facilities in Costa Rica and Nicaragua are very well equipped.

4. Disadvantages

a) Organizational

Any major involvement in the CETT would not be coherent with INCAE's institutional mission. Also, INCAE's overhead costs appear very high.

b) Technical

INCAE does not provide training for primary-school teachers, so there was no need to assess technical capacities in substantive CETT areas.

5. Conclusions for the CETT

INCAE could play a facilitator role for the launching of the CETT initiative if resources are forthcoming to finance its involvement.

INTEC (Instituto Tecnológico de Santo Domingo/ Technological Institute of Santo Domingo), Dominican Republic

1. Target Population

INTEC is a private university, historically geared to serving graduate students in technological studies. It now awards both undergraduate and graduate degrees in a variety of fields. INTEC still specializes in science and technology although the course offerings have widened. Through a cooperative agreement with the Ministry of Education, INTEC serves uncertified, current public-school teachers who are seeking associate's and bachelor's degrees in primary and secondary education and/or teaching certification. INTEC also provides summer courses to public-school teachers as part of a continuing education program.

2. Brief Description of Program

INTEC offers a variety of undergraduate and graduate courses of study in sciences and technology. The institution also offers teacher certification and bachelor's degree studies to public-school teachers. In addition, the Education Studies Center offers a variety of associate's, bachelor's and master's degrees in areas such as preschool education, Spanish and math instruction in primary schools, school administration, and applied linguistics.

INTEC has conducted extensive in-school interventions in socially disadvantaged urban areas of Santo Domingo. Through its longstanding link with the Círculo Infantil Foundation of Mercedes Hernández, an adjunct faculty member and advisor, INTEC has been involved in preschool education and, more specifically, reading preparedness through innovative constructivist approaches. INTEC has conducted an important research effort in reading-related topics from both a learning theory and an applied linguistics perspective through its several faculty specialists. In recognition of its expertise, INTEC has been the leader of the Spanish language component of the World Bank-funded teacher program under which it has designed and produced a variety of teachers' guides and materials on reading and writing didactics. INTEC has completed the syllabus design and is about to launch a graduate program in reading didactics that will be led by the Ministry of Education's Director of Basic Education, who is also a specialist in reading.

3. Advantages

a) Organizational

There is ample physical and technological capacity at INTEC. The institute has experience with administering USAID grant funds. INTEC is a self-sustaining institution, with 50 percent of its income coming from tuition fees and 50 percent from projects and sales of services. It also has good connections with regional, US and European academic institutions, as well as close ties with, and support from, the

private sector. INTEC also has good working relations at the local level with the Ministry of Education and with PUCMM.

b) Technical

INTEC demonstrates sound reading-specific teaching and research experience, and has gathered a respectable contingent of reading specialists on its campus. INTEC works in close cooperation with the Ministry of Education and the public-school system. Much of its research and in-school intervention is conducted in marginalized urban areas of Santo Domingo. The institute has the largest and best-endowed university library in the country and is also well equipped with ICT technology.

4. Disadvantages

a) Organizational

The large amount of part-time and adjunct faculty could pose a problem for the CETT in long-term commitment of institutional talent and potential impermanence of the human resource base. INTEC provided limited information on its administrative and financial management systems to the assessment team.

b) Technical

INTEC has limited experience and expertise in diagnostic and performance assessment. The area of operation and reach of programs is limited to Santo Domingo. The limited experience INTEC has with distance learning and education technology applications is very recent, therefore expertise is rather undeveloped.

5. Conclusions for the CETT

INTEC could bring skills in reading instruction to the CETT in a collaborating role with PUCMM.

PUCMM (Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra/ Pontifical Catholic University Mother and Teacher), Dominican Republic

1. Target population

The target population includes Dominican high-school graduates and professionals seeking undergraduate and graduate degrees. Professionals from the Caribbean area come to PUCMM to pursue graduate-level studies in tourism, business administration and other disciplines. Public-school teachers pursue teacher certification courses and bachelor's degrees at PUCMM. Teachers also take summer courses in the continuing education program by PUCMM.

2. Brief description of program

PUCMM offers a wide variety of undergraduate and graduate courses of study in the natural and social sciences. With a student population of 15,000, it is one of the largest Catholic universities in the region. Since the early 1990s PUCMM has been offering teacher certification courses and bachelor's degrees to public-school teachers under a massive teacher training program funded by IDB and the World Bank. PUCMM participates in the summer programs for public-school teachers under a cooperative agreement with the Ministry of Education. PUCMM is also strong in action research geared to enhancing the quality of instruction at the classroom level and ascertaining factors that favor or impede achievement. In reading, PUCMM has a systematic program of reading promotion entitled Pro-Lectura under which it designed, tested, and is beginning to distribute an interactive software for reading skills improvement (Time for Reading) at the primary-school level.

3. Advantages

a) Organizational

PUCMM has a long, successful track record in administering USAID grant funds. A recent USAID evaluation gave them high marks for management. The university has good administration and financial management systems in place. PUCMM has an extensive network of academic and research links throughout the region, as well as ample, installed physical and ICT technology capacity.

b) Technical

PUCMM has extensive experience in teacher training, educational research and reading materials design, as well as a highly qualified and experienced faculty. PUCMM maintains close ties with school systems and education authorities. Additionally, PUCMM demonstrates a fast-growing involvement in distance learning and ICT applications.

4. Disadvantages

a) Organizational

No major organizational weaknesses were detected by the follow-up assessment team.

b) Technical

PUCMM has limited experience and expertise in diagnostic and performance assessment. PUCMM has done extensive work with grades 4-8, and could bring this experience to bear on programming for grades 1-3.

6. Conclusions for the CETT

PUCMM could provide leadership in reading instruction to the CETT.

UPN (Universidad Pedagógica Nacional-Francisco Morazán/ National Pedagogical University-Francisco Morazán), Honduras

1. Target Population

The target population includes Honduran high-school graduates seeking a career in high-school teaching, school administration, education counseling and guidance, and other education-related fields. College graduates are also at UPN pursuing master's degrees and other graduate-level studies in education programs. Teachers from elementary and high schools come to UPN to take part in a wide range of continuing education courses. There are mothers and community leaders participating in the UPN community-based, preschool education program. Education policymakers in the Honduran government and the private sector are also involved in some of UPN's programs.

2. Brief Description of Programs

UPN is Central America's largest pedagogical university with a student population of 17,000. UPN is a public university that depends mainly on Honduran government funding and external grants. The university prepares teachers for high-school teaching in all subject areas. Starting in February 2002, UPN will offer the first university-level training course in Honduras for primary-school teachers. UPN also offers a variety of graduate programs, leading to master's degrees in areas such as educational research, educational technology, learning evaluation and comparative education. UPN undertakes a sizeable education research effort through a large and well-established research department and through the Quality of Education Measurement Unit (UMCE). UMCE has for the past four years been responsible for designing, applying, processing and disseminating the results of the Ministry of Education's achievement tests for third, sixth, and ninth graders in a national sample of schools. UPN runs a primary and secondary lab school in an adjacent building. UPN is an active player in Honduras in education policymaking, and enjoys excellent relations with the Ministry of Education, particularly with the incoming Maduro Administration.

3. Advantages of the Institution

a) Organizational

UPN has a very dynamic rector with a participatory leadership style. He is assisted by a team of equally competent vice-rectors and senior administrators. It is evident that the current leadership is quite open to growth and change. UPN's well-trained personnel would have the depth and talent needed to run CETT operations. There would seemingly be no need for hiring new staff. UPN demonstrates significant institutional development potential. The strategic plan includes goals of increased sustainability, including the establishment of a UPN Foundation to generate income

for the university. There has been a gradual decrease in financial dependence on the government of Honduras (from 97 percent to 83 percent in three years). On the UPN campus, there is an excellent ICT infrastructure run by sophisticated U.S.-trained systems managers. UPN is active in several Central American universities and education networks.

b) Technical

UPN has vast experience in both pre- and in-service teacher training. The university also has extensive research experience, and is particularly strong in testing and performance assessment. The excellent on-campus teaching and research facilities include a new library and an educational technology center. There is also an excellent lab school on the university campus. The highly educated faculty and research staff include many graduates of U.S. master's and doctoral degree programs. UPN demonstrates superior capabilities in preschool and special education, as well as a large, active and very competent publishing operation of educational materials. The education reform climate in Honduras is very positive with an incoming administration fully committed to improving education in the country.

4. Disadvantages

a) Organizational

UPN has a limited track record in project fund management, and only very recently has the university begun fundraising efforts. There is significant dependence on Honduran government funding. UPN would perhaps require considerable support for the launching and initial management of the CETT, as well for ensuring its sustainability over time.

b) Technical

UPN's first experience in pre-service training of primary-school teachers came in February 2002. Although the education environment in Honduras has historically been slow to progress, the Maduro administration has articulated a strong commitment to education reform.

5. Conclusions for the CETT

In the view of the assessment team, UPN could take on a leadership role in the CETT, particularly providing its strong technical expertise in the areas of teacher training and diagnostic and performance assessment.

UVG (Universidad del Valle de Guatemala/ Del Valle University of Guatemala)

1. Target Population

The target population includes Guatemalan high-school graduates, graduate students, members of the general public interested in taking non-degree technical courses, and uncertified elementary- and high-school teachers working toward teaching certification. UVG also reaches teachers serving in the Guatemalan school system who participate in occasional in-service teacher training courses.

2. Brief Description of Programs

UVG is a small private university with a student population of around 2,300. Most students are pursuing undergraduate and graduate degrees in natural, social and behavioral sciences, and education. There are major research units in environmental and health sciences at UVG working in partnership with important U.S. scientific research centers. The teacher training program serves current teachers in primary and secondary schools who wish to obtain teacher certification. Bachelor's degrees are also offered in bilingual intercultural teaching, special education, and the teaching of hearing impaired children.

3. Advantages

a) Organizational

UVG has a sophisticated management system with a well-developed strategic plan. The highly qualified staff includes several world-class scientists. The excellent track record in project management includes administering U.S. government funds. UVG is an experienced fundraiser and grant-seeker through its own U.S. foundation. The university's campus facilities are impressive, with extensive ICT resources.

b) Technical

UVG enjoys wide respect as a fine institution of higher education. The university's long involvement in education research and teaching, as well as the superior track record in performance assessment and testing design, are advantages. UVG has undertaken work in education in Mayan cultures and languages for many years. Other technical advantages include the highly qualified and experienced research staff and the availability of excellent teachers next door at UVG's sister institution, the American School.

4. Disadvantages

a) Organizational

UVG does not appear to have absorptive capacity, both in terms of staff availability and physical facilities.

b) Technical

UVG demonstrates no specific experience in early primary pedagogy or reading development. Teacher training experience is limited to a part-time certification course and a few occasional in-service training courses. There is no significant experience with in-school interventions geared to improvement in classroom instruction. There is some recent, but limited, experience in development of teaching materials.

5. Conclusions for the CETT

UVG's Center for Educational Research could contribute its expertise in diagnostic and performance assessment to the CETT operations. UVG could serve as a country-level institution for the CETT interventions in Guatemala.